

THE STATE SCHOOL AID ACT OF 1979 (EXCERPT)

Act 94 of 1979

388.1632b Programs to improve school readiness and positive parenting skills, enhance parent-child interaction, promote growth, and access community services; grants; data collection system; office for safe schools; duties of department and superintendent; use of funds; carrying over unexpended funds.

Sec. 32b.

(1) From the state school aid fund allocation in section 32a(1), there is allocated an amount not to exceed \$45,000,000.00 for 2001-2002 and \$0.00 for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 for grants to intermediate districts and districts for programs for preschool children and their parents. The purpose of these programs is to improve school readiness and foster the maintenance of stable families by encouraging positive parenting skills; enhancing parent-child interaction; providing learning opportunities to promote intellectual, physical, and social growth; and promoting access to needed community services through a community-school-home partnership that provides parents with information on child development from birth to age 5.

(2) To qualify for funding under this section, a program shall meet all of the following:

(a) The program must provide services to all families with children age 5 or younger residing within the intermediate district or district who choose to participate, including at least all of the following services:

(i) Home visits by parent educators trained in child development to help parents understand appropriate expectations for each stage of their child's development, to encourage learning opportunities, and to promote strong parent-child relationships.

(ii) Group meetings of participating families.

(iii) Periodic developmental screening of the child's overall development, health, hearing, and vision.

(iv) A community resource network that provides referrals to other state, local, and private agencies as appropriate to assist parents in preparing their children for academic success and to foster the maintenance of stable families.

(v) Connection with quality preschool programs.

(b) The program must be a collaborative community effort that includes at least the intermediate district or district, local multipurpose collaborative bodies, local health and welfare agencies, and private nonprofit agencies involved in programs and services for preschool children and their parents.

(3) To compete for a grant under this section, an intermediate district or district shall apply to the superintendent not later than December 1, 2000 in the form and manner prescribed by the superintendent. To be considered for a grant under this section, a grant application must provide all of the following in a manner prescribed by the department:

(a) Provide a plan for the delivery of the program components described in subsection (2).

(b) Demonstrate an adequate collaboration of local entities involved in providing programs and services for preschool children and their parents.

(c) Provide evidence of a review and approval by the local multipurpose collaborative body of the program plan.

(d) Provide a projected budget for the program to be funded. The intermediate district shall provide at least a 20% local match from local public or private resources for the funds received under this section. Not more than 1/2 of this matching requirement, up to a total of 10% of the total project budget, may be satisfied through in-kind services provided by participating providers of programs or services. In addition, not more than 10% of the grant may be used for program administration.

(4) Each successful grant recipient shall agree to include a data collection system and an evaluation tool approved by the department to measure the impact of the program on improving school readiness, reducing the number of children needing special education programs and services, and fostering the maintenance of stable families. The data collection system shall provide a report by October 15 of each year on the number of children in families with income below 200% of the federal poverty level that received services under this program and the total number of children who received services under this program.

(5) From the general fund allocation under section 32a(1), there is allocated an amount not to exceed \$100.00 for 2001-2002 and \$0.00 for 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 to the department, including the office for safe schools, for implementation and evaluation of activities under this section. Further, upon receipt of the federal drug-free schools grant, the department shall allocate \$200,000.00 of that grant to the office for safe schools within the department.

(6) The department and superintendent shall do all of the following:

(a) The department shall make applications available for the purposes of this section not later than October 15, 2000.

(b) The superintendent shall approve or disapprove applications and notify the applying intermediate district or district of that decision not later than February 1, 2001. Priority in awarding grants shall be given to programs that focus on reducing the percentage of children needing special education programs and services when they enter school. The superintendent shall ensure that the intermediate districts and districts receiving grants under this section are geographically and economically diverse and that not more than 10% of the total allocation under this section is paid to any 1 particular intermediate district or district.

(c) The department shall ensure that all programs funded under this section utilize the most current validated research-based methods and curriculum for providing the program components described in subsection (2).

(d) The department shall submit a report to the legislature, the state budget director, and the senate and house fiscal agencies detailing the evaluations described in subsection (4) by December 1 of each year.

(7) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (8), an intermediate district or district receiving funds under this section shall use the funds only for the program funded under this section. Subject to subsection (8), grants awarded by February 1, 2001 may be used for the following school year.

(8) A district or intermediate district receiving funds under this section may carry over any unexpended funds received under this section to subsequent fiscal years and may expend those unused funds in subsequent fiscal years. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, funds carried over under this subsection may be used to facilitate programs that are substantially similar in purpose to those funded under this section.